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there is always plenty of time for endless bargaining and haggling. Proceedings with regard to the presentation are opened well in advance, when the father-in-law goes to his daughter's husband and says, "You know that I am about to perform a certain cycle of rites; I expect you at the culminating ceremony to present me with a tusker of such or such grade." The son-in-law may argue that through poverty or through the demands on his resources made by rites he is himself performing, or for some other reason, he can only afford to present a tusker of some lesser grade. If the wife's father sticks to his point (and it will be realised that in this case the wife's influence is on the side of the father, and the prestige acquired through generous giving also throws its weight into the same scale), there is little that the son-in-law can do to mitigate the extent of his obligation.

In any case, negotiations are opened. The two pigs on which the grade is definitely agreed are the presentation-pig and the consideration-pig. The size of the complimentary-pig is left to the generosity of the father-in-law.

The giving in advance of the consideration-pig, whether privately or in public, is unaccompanied by any ritual proceeding other than the blowing of the conch-signal appropriate to its size.

PRESENTATION RITE: "CIRCLING FOR PIGS"

The rite accompanying the presentation of the main subject of the transaction, namely the presentation-pig, is, however, the spectacular one which I have termed "Circling for Pigs." This rite occurs with variations throughout the whole graded society area in various forms.[1] It is the same in essentials throughout the Small Islands, and since, though I saw one performance on Vao, I did not record it in detail, I here give a brief description of the rite as performed on Atchin, having been assured that the Vao version was in all essentials the same.

Torches symbolise tuskers.

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In the Small Islands, as on the mainland of Malekula, the symbols used in this dance are torches. These torches consist of bundles of green reeds five or six feet long, firmly bound together with sinnet at intervals up their length. In ordinary speech they are called in Vao *rehêre* and in Atchin *rosher*.[2] When used to symbolise tusked boars they are, however,

[1] Deacon gives eye-witness accounts from Lambumbu in 4, pp. 364 ff. and 369 ff. See also 4, p. 289. Compare also, for South Raga, Tattevin, 1, 1927, pp. 88 and 423; and for the Banks Islands, Codrington, 3, p. 109, and Rivers, 1, vol. I, p. 74.

[2] This word is also applied to the commoner form of torch made out of coconut leaves, and to the midrib of the coconut under all circumstances. This latter is probably its original meaning.

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in both islands called *se-skil*,[1] and may be treated in three ways, each used as a symbol for one of the three higher grades of tusked boar.[2] Thus:

(*a*) for a curved-tusker the symbol is a new torch made of fresh reeds and unlighted;

(*b*) for a re-entrant-tusker the torch used must be an old one blackened with smoke from having been stored in the roof of the owner's dwelling-house or Lodge, but unlighted;[3]

(*c*) for a circle-tusker it is both blackened and lighted.

Each man about to hand over a presentation-tusker carries one such torch, treated in the manner appropriate to the grade of tusker he is about to present, held horizontally in his outstretched right hand.

Receiver and donor.

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In the following brief description I will refer to the wife's father or brother, at the culminating point of whose major rite the presentation takes place, as the receiver, and to the son-in-law (or sister's husband) as the donor.[4]

The Rite.

The receiver stands in the middle of the dancing-ground. As the members of the visiting village approach, the donor dragging his tusker in their midst, either he or one more skilled in blowing the conch-shell trumpet halts from time to time to blow the trumpet signal appropriate to its grade. These sounds are at first heard afar off, growing louder as the party comes nearer. Arrived at the entrance to the dancing-

[1] Cf. Seniang *se-hul* (Deacon, 4, pp. 413, 741, etc.).

[2] Crescent-tuskers are not used for presentation.

[3] The same symbolism exists in Lambumbu, where Deacon records that unlighted torches danced with in a similar way represent the grade of pig there called *saaragh*, which is equivalent to re-entrant-tusker.

[4] This description is based on my own observation of the transaction as carried out on the occasion of the Gong-Raising rite at the Atchin village of Emil Marur in 1914. The maker of the rite and owner of the gongs, and therefore the receiver, was an Emil Marur man named Mari. The donor was a man of the Atchin village of Ruruar, named Melteg-tilini, whose mother's mother belonged to Mari's village and who was presenting Mari with a curved-tusker. Melteg-tilini having, however, injured his foot and being unable to dance, his classificatory son, Melteg-weraim, "circled" for him.

Mari had previously given Melteg-tilini a crescent-tusker as consideration-pig, on the occasion of the consecration of a new large men's sleeping-house (*se-im noon mwi lep*) erected by Melteg-tilini's Lodge-brother Melteg-tali-waru.

This was only one of the occasions on which I witnessed the rite. I also saw it performed at the consecration of a new sea-going canoe in the Atchin village of Emil Parav, and at High Maki on Rano. These performances will be described in detail in future volumes.

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ground, the party advances slowly towards the receiver and the trumpet signal is once more sounded, those in the party cheering as the blower draws breath for each new stave.

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FIG. 44

"Circling" with blackened and lighted torch for a circle-tusker. The Maki-man carries his torch in his right hand, raising the dust with his swift-moving feet as he circles round towards his wife's father who awaits him outside the picture to the left. The drawing is made from a photograph taken during Low Maki at Peter-ihi, facing the Lower Side of the dancing-ground where women and children watch from behind a light fence made of decorated bamboos.

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535 relieving one another at will without break in the continuous uproar. Sometimes the pace and volume of the sound will slacken, then again swell forth as some new party joins or a better-known song is begun.

Each song has its own tune, composed to the rhythm of the dance. On any given night the most important songs belonging to the cycle will be sung first, but, after these, fresh songs may be struck up by any individual singer starting the refrain. Some will be taken up, while others, not so popular or started by some unimportant or unpopular guests, will be drowned out by rival singers. There will be a moment or two of indescribable confusion while two rival parties are struggling for the acceptance of a given song, but soon one will prevail, and when it does the victorious party will cheer, the gongs will strike in, the special step be resumed, and the song then proceeds to its allotted end. Sometimes a verse may be forgotten or imperfectly remembered; then the song will peter out, with cries and jeers from all the dancers, or may be retrieved by someone with a better memory singing out the words. The leaders of the guests maintain the rhythm all the time by beating on their bamboo staves.

535 373 Dancers from time to time drop out, and sit round fires lit about the dancing-ground, talking and eating puddings and bananas. Other fires are maintained for the special use of the Maki-men who dance with torches round the guests, fresh torches being stacked around them to replace those which burn out. One solitary torch of huge dimensions burns all night, standing erect at one end of the dancing-ground.

535 As I have said, this dance, witnessed on Atchin, may not agree in all particulars with its counterpart as danced on Vao, but it will give at least some idea of what such dances are like. I will now proceed to give an account of the occasions on which the three remaining circular dances are performed and, so far as I am able, their cultural significance.

Velal

This is probably the simplest and least significant of the circular dances. The name is derived from *vel*, the ordinary word for "to dance," but I am unable to explain the final syllable. This seems to be a kind of preparatory dance. It is performed during the early stages of each main division in the long cycle of rites, and before all these opening occasions the songs are publicly rehearsed and practised in the dancing-ground, the dancers sitting down in the positions to be occupied later in the dance. At each culminating point, however, it is replaced by one of the more important circular dances. It is thus the first dance in the series of rites leading up to the erection of the gongs,[1] but is replaced at the culmination

[1] See p. 356.